

MOD PRESS BRIEFING MADE BY MR JOHN NORT, SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE ON  
3 MAY 82 AT 2030 HOURS IN COURAGE HALL, MAIN BUILDING

- Q. You talk about the minimum use of force - was the attack the British made really using the minimum amount of force?
- A. If there is a threat to our ships and men we have no possible option but to respond to that threat. Our first duty is to protect our own men and therefore it was quite correct that we attacked in the way we did.
- Q. Is Britain engaged in a war with Argentina?
- A. Certainly we have hostilities with the Argentines. It is not in legal terms, however, a war, although the ordinary layman would class it as a war. We have the right of self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.
- Q. Does the right to self-defence include the right to invade the Island if necessary?
- A. We would operate in self-defence under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter. These Islands are British.
- Q. What would be your description of the way things have gone and the prospects ahead?
- A. There does not seem to be a will to settle this matter by peaceful means on the Argentine side. I hope we can settle the matter peacefully.
- Q. Do you expect it to be a bloody conflict?
- A. I sincerely hope not. There is still time for a peaceful solution.
- Q. Have the Americans to date aided any of the missions?
- A. We have received no military assistance from the United States. Nor will we seek it. We were naturally delighted at the offer of materiel support but there are further talks going on about that. It has only been talked about in general terms so far. It may be in the form of logistic support.
- Q. What is your response to the claims that have been coming from the Argentines?
- A. We have made it quite clear that many of the claims coming from Buenos Aires are just inaccurate. We will do our utmost to give you facts.
- Q. In the light of your early success what do you think it will take to make the Argentines surrender?
- A. I don't wish for a surrender as such. We want a withdrawal from the Falkland Islands and then we are prepared to go into negotiations for the long term future of the Islands. We have always made that quite clear.
- Q. Could we have finished the cruiser off completely?
- A. I should imagine it would have been possible.
- Q. Would it be the policy of the Royal Navy to assist if there are any survivors from an attack?
- A. I believe the Royal Navy dropped some rescue equipment for the crew of the patrol craft that was sunk. I would hope where it is possible we can exercise every opportunity of helping in the rescue of any Argentines in that position, including the use of our medical and hospital facilities.